ATLAS

JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY

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AUG.

NO. 11

10¢

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"THE OTHER FACE!"

"THE HIDDEN VAMPIRES!"

"IF THE COAT FITS!"

ON SALE MONTHLY

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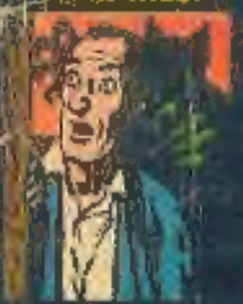


"IF THE COAT FITS!"

READY FOR A SPINE-CHILLING JOURNEY? GOOD! THE FIRST STOP ON OUR ITINERARY IS HUNGARY... LAND OF GOULASH, OLD CASTLES AND NIGHT-STALKING VAMPIRES! YOU NEVER KNOW, IN THIS TOWN, IF YOUR OWN NEIGHBOR IS GOING TO BORROW A CUP OF SUGAR... OR A QUART OF BLOOD! SO YOU BETTER NOT MOVE TO ROVATO!

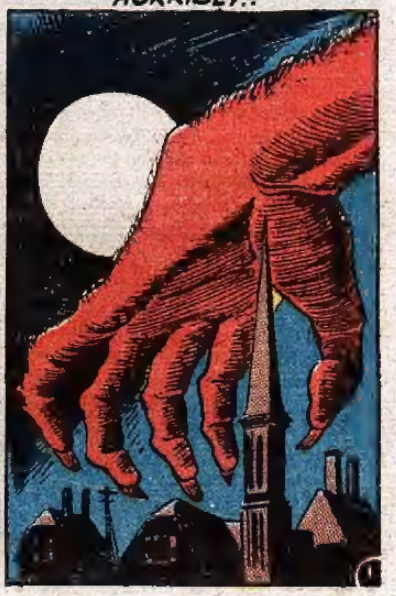
THE HIDDEN VAMPIRES

A SPINE-TINGLING JOURNEY INTO FEAR!

THE VILLAGE OF ROVATO IN NORTHERN HUNGARY HAD ALWAYS BEEN FAMOUS FOR ITS PINK-CHEEKED, ROBUST PEOPLE...

...WHOSE MUSCLES WERE OF IRON, AND THRU WHOSE VEINS FLOWED THICK, RICH BLOOD...

...BUT TIMES HAVE CHANGED... HORRIBLY!!

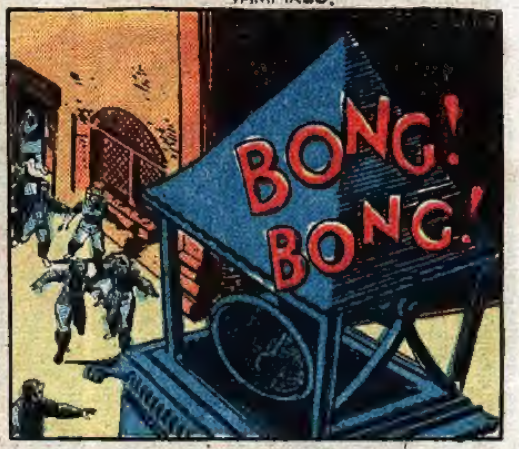


AND NOW THE VILLAGE OF ROVATO IS INFAMOUS FOR... *ITS HIDDEN VAMPIRES!*

VAMPIRES WHO STRIKE AGAIN AND AGAIN TILL EVERY VILLAGER WALKS SLOWLY THRU THE NARROW STREETS GAUNT AND FEEBLE...

EVERY HOUSE IN THE VILLAGE HAS BEEN SEARCHED THOROUGHLY... BUT ALWAYS IN VAIN...THE VAMPIRES REMAIN HIDDEN! NO ONE CAN FIND THEM!

TODAY, A BELL IS TOLLING...AND PALE FACES LIFT HOPEFULLY! FOR THE MAYOR HAS PROMISED THAT THE TOLLING OF THE BELLS WILL SIGNAL THAT HE HAS FOUND A WAY TO FERRET OUT THE VAMPIRES!



SO THE VILLAGERS GATHER WEARILY TOGETHER, AND WAIT FOR THE MAYOR TO SPEAK...

MY FRIENDS... I HAVE HERE A LETTER FROM A JAN MAZEROK IN BUDAPEST WHO HAS HEARD OF OUR DREADFUL PLIGHT, AND GUARANTEES UNCONDITIONALLY TO FIND THE HIDDEN VAMPIRES FOR US! HE ARRIVES BY CARRIAGE TOMORROW!
HEAR! HEAR!

THE MEETING IS OVER WITH MIXED FEELINGS...THE VILLAGERS WALK SLOWLY BACK TO THEIR HOUSES...

AN UNCONDITIONAL GUARANTEE! WHAT MORE COULD WE ASK?
BOSH! WORDS COME EASY! IF YOU ASK ME, THE VAMPIRES WILL WELCOME HIM GLADLY... AND KILL HIM BEFORE HE'S BEEN HERE 24 HOURS!

DARKNESS ENFOLDS ROVATO! THE VILLAGERS SLEEP FITFULLY... DREAMING OF DELIVERANCE FROM THE SCOURGE OF HORROR! ONLY IN THE HOME OF STEFAN KERO, IS THE ENTIRE FAMILY AWAKE!

FATHER, THIS MAN FROM BUDAPEST... DO WE HAVE ANYTHING TO FEAR?
NO...NOTHING AT ALL! NO ONE SHALL EVER KNOW THAT WE ARE THE HIDDEN VAMPIRES!

WITH THEATRICAL MAKE-UP WE HAVE MADE OUR FACES LOOK AS GAUNT AS EVERYBODY ELSE'S... BY WEARING CLOTHES MANY SIZES TOO LARGE FOR US, WE APPEAR TO HAVE LOST AS MUCH WEIGHT AS EVERYBODY ELSE!

"AND WHEN THEY SEARCHED OUR HOUSE, REMEMBER HOW I STOOD IN FRONT OF WHAT THEY THOUGHT WAS A CLEAR MIRROR? IT WAS ACTUALLY A MIRROR WITH A PAINTED PORTRAIT OF MYSELF ON IT... SINCE EVERYBODY KNOWS THAT A VAMPIRE'S IMAGE CANNOT BE REFLECTED, THAT FALSE MIRROR SAVED US..."

I TELL YOU AGAIN... THERE IS NOTHING TO FEAR! I KNOW ALL THE DEVICES THESE VAMPIRE-SEARCHERS USE... AND BELIEVE ME, WE NEED NOT LEAVE THIS VILLAGE TILL WE HAVE SUCKED IT DRY OF EVERY DROP OF BLOOD!

THE NEXT MORNING FINDS EVERYBODY ANXIOUSLY AWAITING THE CARRIAGE FROM BUDAPEST... AND STEFAN KERO AND HIS FAMILY, IN THEIR CLEVER DISGUISES, WAIT TOO...

THE VILLAGERS WAIT BREATHLESSLY AS THE CARRIAGE DOOR CREAKS SLOWLY OPEN...A MOMENT LATER, THEY ARE GASPING WITH DISAPPOINTMENT!

UGGH! LOOK HOW PUNY HE IS!
I DO NOT UNDERSTAND! I HAVE ALWAYS HEARD THAT VAMPIRE-SEARCHERS WERE GIANT MEN WITH BLACK, GLARING EYES!
OUR MAYOR WAS TRICKED! THE VILLAGE IS DOOMED!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

I'LL SAY IT FOR YOU...I LOOK LIKE A WEAKLING! WELL... MY GUARANTEE WAS UNCONDITIONAL...AND IT REMAINS SO! TELL EVERYBODY TO STAY INSIDE TONIGHT! I WILL PATROL THE STREETS...

HOME FROM MEETING THE CARRIAGE, THE KEROS LAUGH GRIMLY...

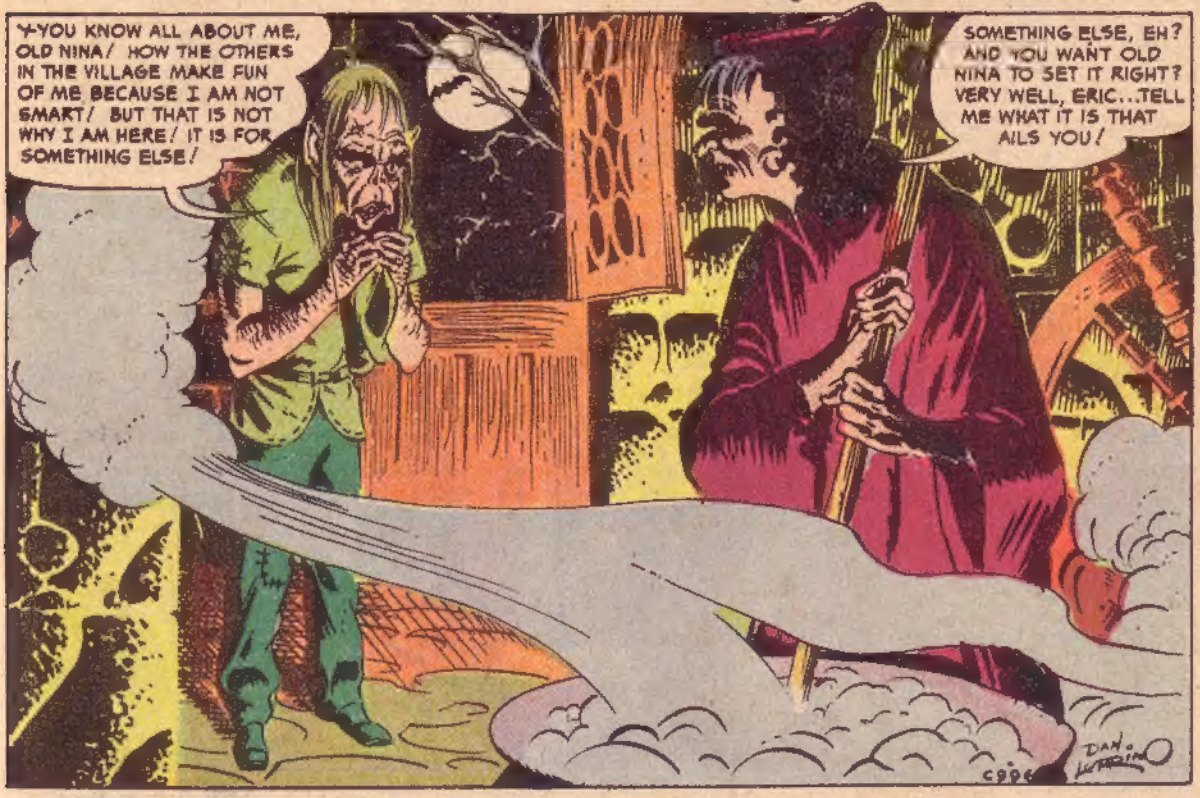
THE DAY IS ENDED NOW...THE SUN SINKS UNDER THE HORIZON IN A BLAZE OF RED...AND ONCE AGAIN, THE VILLAGE OF ROVATO IN NORTHERN HUNGARY IS SHROUDED IN DARKNESS! ONLY THE YOUNG MAN FROM BUDAPEST WITH HIS LITTLE BLACK BOX, WALKS ABOUT IN THE SHADOWY STREETS...

NOW HE PLACES THE BOX DOWN ON THE COBBLE-STONES! HE OPENS IT!

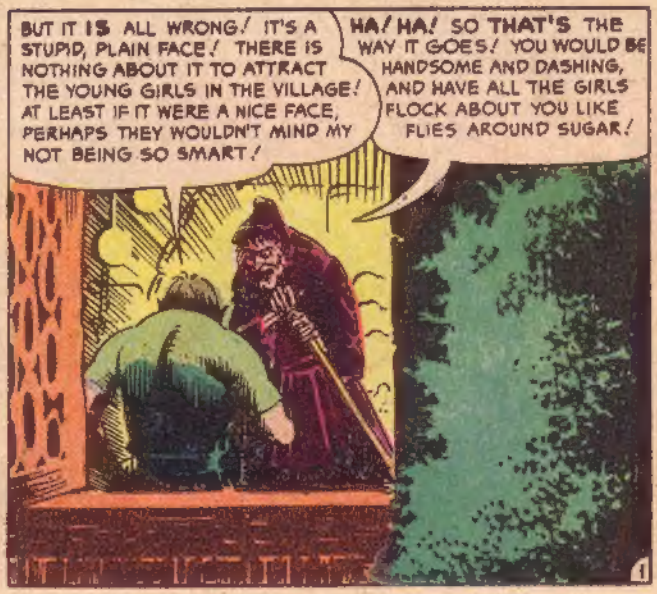
AND HE LEAPS BACK...AS A STRANGE BUZZING SWELLS LOUDER AND LOUDER IN THE STILL NIGHT AIR!

INSIDE THE KERO HOUSE, THE FAMILY PREPARES TO GO TO BED...
YOU WILL SEE...TOMORROW THE VAMPIRE-SEARCHER WILL BE LAUGHED BACK TO BUDAPEST!
AH, STEFAN... YOU ARE SO CLEVER!
Home Sweet Home
AND ONCE AGAIN WE WILL BE ABLE TO SPRING FROM THE SHADOWS TO SUCK THE VILLAGERS' BLOOD!
BUT SUDDENLY THE AIR OUTSIDE THE KERO HOUSE IS ALIVE WITH A STRANGE BUZZING!
NO...IT CAN'T BE! THEY HAVE NEVER BEEN USED BEFORE!!
BZZZZZZ
THAT WINDOW! CLOSE THAT WINDOW!! AIEEEEE!!
HELP!! HELP!!
I HAVE FOUND THEM! I HAVE FOUND THE HIDDEN VAMPIRES! COME, EVERYBODY, WITH YOUR SHARPENED STAKES TO PIERCE THEIR FOUL HEARTS!
BZZZZZZZZ
H-HOW DID YOU DO IT?
YOU WROTE ME THAT EVERYBODY HERE HAS BEEN DRAINED ALMOST COMPLETELY... RIGHT? THAT MEANS ONLY THE HIDDEN VAMPIRES HAVE VEINS SWOLLEN WITH THICK RICH BLOOD! ALL I HAD TO DO WAS RELEASE MY HELPERS FROM MY LITTLE BLACK BOX...AND THEY WENT FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE TILL THEY FOUND THE VAMPIRES!
YOUR HELPERS? WHO ARE YOUR HELPERS?!?
5
AAAGGHH!
THESE ARE MY HELPERS... A THOUSAND STARVED MOSQUITOES!!
BZZZZZ
THE END

THE NEW LOOK


YOU KNOW ALL ABOUT ME, OLD NINA! HOW THE OTHERS IN THE VILLAGE MAKE FUN OF ME BECAUSE I AM NOT SMART! BUT THAT IS NOT WHY I AM HERE! IT IS FOR SOMETHING ELSE!
SOMETHING ELSE, EH? AND YOU WANT OLD NINA TO SET IT RIGHT? VERY WELL, ERIC...TELL ME WHAT IT IS THAT AILS YOU!
DAN LORRAINE
C99¢

MY FACE, NINA! EACH DAY I GET TO HATE IT MORE AND MORE!
IT ISN'T A PRETTY FACE, BUT IT DOES ITS PURPOSE! THE EYES LOOK CLEAR AND THE EARS MAY BE LARGE, BUT THEY HEAR WELL ENOUGH! THE CHIN COULD SHOW MORE STRENGTH, BUT OTHER THAN THAT I SEE NOTHING WRONG!


BUT IT IS ALL WRONG! IT'S A STUPID, PLAIN FACE! THERE IS NOTHING ABOUT IT TO ATTRACT THE YOUNG GIRLS IN THE VILLAGE! AT LEAST IF IT WERE A NICE FACE, PERHAPS THEY WOULDN'T MIND MY NOT BEING SO SMART!
HA! HA! SO THAT'S THE WAY IT GOES! YOU WOULD BE HANDSOME AND DASHING, AND HAVE ALL THE GIRLS FLOCK ABOUT YOU LIKE FLIES AROUND SUGAR!
1

I DIDN'T COME TO HAVE YOU LAUGH AT ME TOO! I THOUGHT YOU WOULD HELP ME, BUT YOU'RE LIKE THE OTHERS! I WILL GO AWAY AND NEVER COME BACK!
I DIDN'T SAY I WOULDN'T HELP YOU! BUT GIVING YOU A NEW FACE IS SOMETHING I CANNOT DO ALONE! IT CALLS FOR POWERS FAR GREATER THAN MY OWN!
IT ALL DEPENDS ON THE MASTER I SERVE! ONLY HE CAN GRANT YOU YOUR WISH, BUT FIRST HE MUST BE SUMMONED! TELL ME, ERIC, IF I WERE TO CALL HIM... WOULD YOU STILL GO THROUGH WITH IT?
YES...I WOULD! CALL UPON HIM, NINA! DO IT NOW!
AND SO OLD NINA STIRS HER KETTLE, AND AS A CLOUD OF HISSING STEAM GUSHES FROM THE BLACKENED POT, HER CRACKLING VOICE ECHOES OMINOUSLY AGAINST THE RESOUNDING WALLS!
MASTER, MASTER, I CALL UPON THEE... PRESENT THY FACE TO ERIC AND ME!
I AM HERE! NOW STATE YOUR BUSINESS, SLAVE, AND BE QUICK ABOUT IT! I HAVE LITTLE TIME TO WASTE!
I CALL UPON YOU FOR ERIC, OH MASTER! HE WOULD HAVE A NEW FACE...A HANDSOME ONE, HE SAYS! ONE THAT WOULD SEND ALL THE PRETTY GIRLS IN THE VILLAGE SWOONING AT HIS FEET!
A MOST NATURAL REQUEST, NOW THAT I SEE YOU UP CLOSE! FORTUNATELY FOR YOU I HAPPEN TO BE IN A GENEROUS MOOD! ALL RIGHT, THEN, MASTER ERIC...YOU SHALL HAVE YOUR REQUEST!
YOU SHALL HAVE A NEW FACE...AND A HANDSOME ONE! NONE IN THE VILLAGE WILL COMPARE TO IT! FAREWELL, MASTER ERIC! HO, HO! HA, HA, HA!
HE'S GONE! HE PROMISED ME A NEW FACE...AND A HANDSOME ONE! BUT HOW CAN I BE SURE? HE LAUGHED LIKE ALL THE OTHERS! MAYBE HE WON'T KEEP HIS PROMISE!
STOP TALKING LIKE THE FOOL YOU ARE! MY MASTER MAY BE THE SLY ONE, BUT HE HAS NEVER FAILED YET TO KEEP HIS WORD! HE HAS PROMISED YOU A HANDSOME NEW FACE, AND YOU SHALL HAVE IT! NOW LISTEN CAREFULLY TO MY INSTRUCTIONS!
2

YOU WILL RETURN TO YOUR HOUSE AT ONCE! WHEN YOU ARE HOME, CLOSE THE WINDOWS AND BOLT THE DOOR! THEN GET INTO BED WHERE SLEEP WILL COME QUICKLY! AT MIDNIGHT YOU WILL AWAKE AND THEN... **THEN** YOU WILL HAVE YOUR NEW FACE!

I WILL DO IT **EXACTLY!** GOOD NIGHT, NINA!

SO ERIC HURRIES HOME, AND DOES EXACTLY AS HE IS TOLD...

I HAVE CLOSED THE WINDOWS AND NOW I AM BOLTING THE DOOR! THEN I MUST GET INTO BED!

IT'S HAPPENING JUST AS SHE SAID! I FEEL SO SLEEPY! MY EYES ARE LIKE STONES! CAN'T KEEP THEM OPEN! GOT TO SLEEP... GOT TO...

BUT WHILE ERIC SLEEPS, THE WHEELS OF TIME GRIND RELENTLESSLY ON... SLOWLY, MOURNFULLY, THE VILLAGE CLOCK CHIMES THE HOUR OF MIDNIGHT...

BONG BONG BONG

AND THEN ERIC IS SUDDENLY AWAKE!

IT'S **MIDNIGHT!** THE TIME I'M SUPPOSED TO GET MY NEW FACE! I CAN'T WAIT TILL I LOOK IN THE MIRROR!... I'VE **GOT** TO SEE!

WITH POUNDING HEART, ERIC DASHES TO HIS SMALL MIRROR... AND THEN...

IT'S **TRUE!** IT **DID** HAPPEN! MY FACE... IT'S A NEW ONE... AND **HANDSOME!** THE MOST HANDSOME IN ALL THE VILLAGE!

BUT AS ERIC TURNS AWAY, HIS SLOW BRAIN DETECTS SOMETHING AMISS! TERROR STABS AT HIS HEART AND A MADDENING CRY LEAPS FROM HIS THROAT...

AIIII

YES, ERIC GOT HIS **NEW** FACE ALL RIGHT... AND THE OLD ONE? WELL, LIKE OLD NINA SAID, HER MASTER MAY BE SLY, BUT HE ALWAYS KEEPS HIS WORD... AFTER ALL, HE **DID** GIVE HIM A **NEW FACE!!**

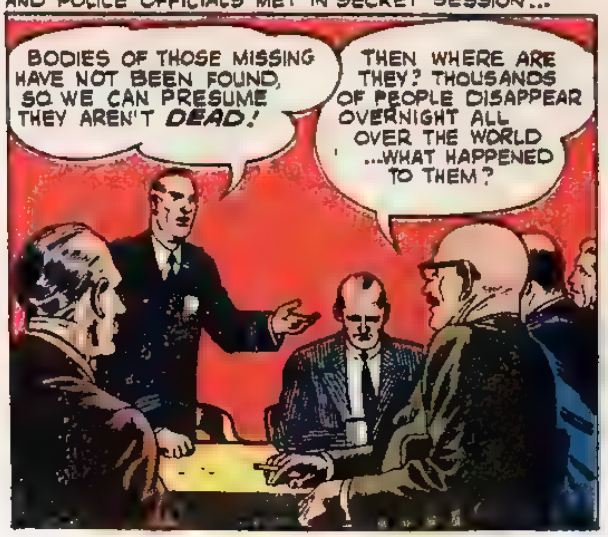
THE END

POOR ERIC! THEY USED TO CALL HIM UGLY.. NOW THEY'LL SAY HE'S ***TWO-FACED!*** YOU JUST CAN'T WIN! HERE'S A PROBLEM FOR THE OFFICIALS TO SOLVE...PEOPLE ARE DISAPPEARING WITHOUT RHYME OR REASON! NOW, IF SOME OF ***YOUR*** FRIENDS SHOULD SUDDENLY TAKE A POWDER, MAYBE THIS WEIRDIE WILL TELL YOU ***WHY!***

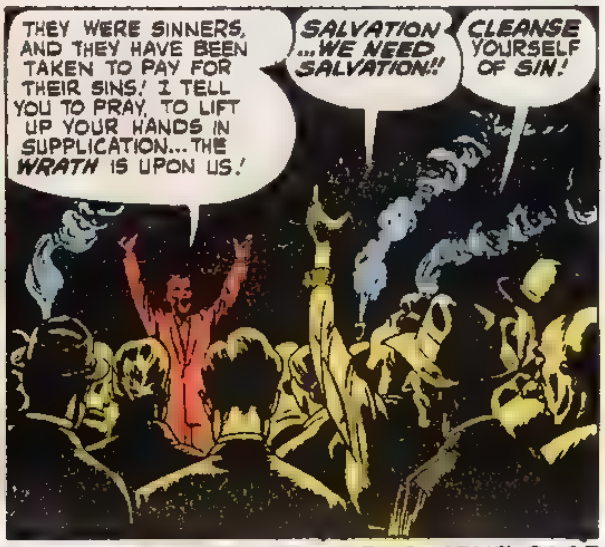
IF THE COAT FITS

MORE MISSING PERSONS
MANY MORE PEOPLE MYSTERIOUSLY DISAPPEAR. GOVERNMENT, POLICE FRANTIC. MOUNTING HYSTERIA. NO CLUES, NO REASONS FOR MOUNTING TOLL OF MISSIN
A SPINE-TINGLING JOURNEY INTO MYSTERY!

IT WAS A THING TO WONDER AT...PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE, DISAPPEARING AS THOUGH THE GROUND HAD OPENED UP AND SWALLOWED THEM! GOVERNMENT AND POLICE OFFICIALS MET IN SECRET SESSION...


BODIES OF THOSE MISSING HAVE NOT BEEN FOUND, SO WE CAN PRESUME THEY AREN'T DEAD!
THEN WHERE ARE THEY? THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE DISAPPEAR OVERNIGHT ALL OVER THE WORLD ...WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?

AND THE PEOPLE HELD THEIR OWN SESSIONS. .PEOPLE FRANTIC WITH FEAR, SEARCHING FOR THEIR OWN ANSWERS...


THEY WERE SINNERS, AND THEY HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO PAY FOR THEIR SINS! I TELL YOU TO PRAY, TO LIFT UP YOUR HANDS IN SUPPLICATION...THE WRATH IS UPON US!
SALVATION ...WE NEED SALVATION!!
CLEANSE YOURSELF OF SIN!

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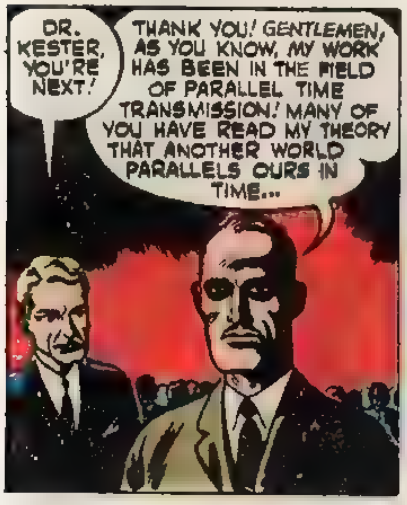
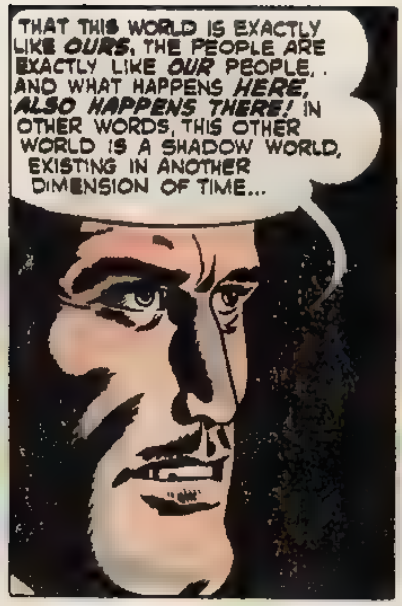
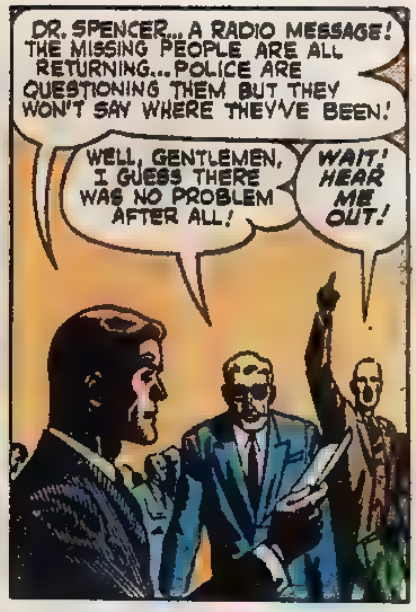
IN A QUIETER VEIN, THE THINKERS, THE MEN OF SCIENCE MET, AND PROFOUND THEORIES WERE PROPOUNDED, DISCUSSED AND REJECTED!


DR. KESTER, YOU'RE NEXT!
THANK YOU! GENTLEMEN, AS YOU KNOW, MY WORK HAS BEEN IN THE FIELD OF PARALLEL TIME TRANSMISSION! MANY OF YOU HAVE READ MY THEORY THAT ANOTHER WORLD PARALLELS OURS IN TIME...


THAT THIS WORLD IS EXACTLY LIKE OURS, THE PEOPLE ARE EXACTLY LIKE OUR PEOPLE, AND WHAT HAPPENS HERE, ALSO HAPPENS THERE! IN OTHER WORDS, THIS OTHER WORLD IS A SHADOW WORLD, EXISTING IN ANOTHER DIMENSION OF TIME...


DR. SPENCER... A RADIO MESSAGE! THE MISSING PEOPLE ARE ALL RETURNING... POLICE ARE QUESTIONING THEM BUT THEY WON'T SAY WHERE THEY'VE BEEN!
WELL, GENTLEMEN, I GUESS THERE WAS NO PROBLEM AFTER ALL!
WAIT! HEAR ME OUT!

THIS STRENGTHENS MY THEORY! I PROPOSE THAT THE PEOPLE OF THIS SHADOW WORLD HAVE FOUND A WAY TO ENTER OUR WORLD... HAVE KIDNAPED OUR PEOPLE, AND IN SOME UNKNOWN MANNER, TRANSPORTED THEM TO THE SECOND WORLD, AND HAVE TAKEN THEIR PLACES HERE ON EARTH! GENTLEMEN, PLEASE LISTEN!
NONSENSE!
RUBBISH!

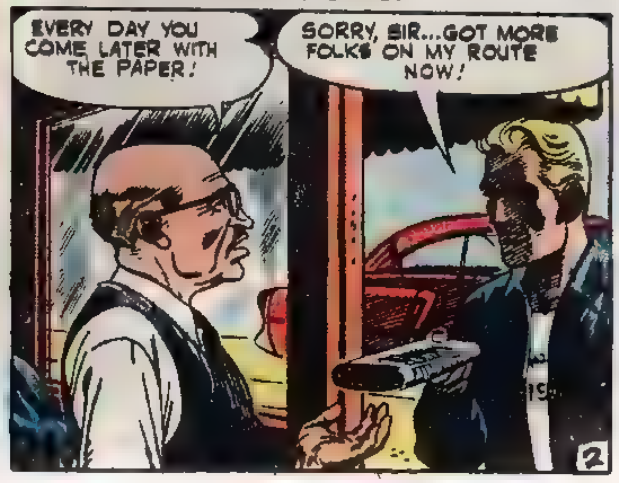
POLICE QUESTIONED THOSE WHO HAD BEEN MISSING...

JUST DECIDED TO TAKE A LITTLE VACATION... THAT'S ALL!
IT'S FRANK ALL RIGHT, BUT IT ISN'T LIKE HIM TO DO A THING LIKE THIS... AND HE SEEMS DIFFERENT SOMEHOW!
JUST YOUR NERVES, LADY!

ALWAYS THE ANSWERS WERE THE SAME...

I NEEDED A REST, SO TOOK OFF WITHOUT TELLING ANYONE ...THAT'S ALL!
YEAH... THAT'S WHAT THEY'VE ALL BEEN TELLING US! MUST'VE BEEN A MASS VACATION EPIDEMIC!

THE NEXT DAY, THE PAPERS WERE FILLED WITH NEWS OF THE RETURNED PERSONS! THERE WAS A SLY, HUMOROUS REFERENCE TO DR. KESTER'S THEORY, WHICH ENDED WITH A REPORT OF HIS DISAPPEARANCE! ONE OF THESE PAPERS WAS DELIVERED TO HARRY'S USED CLOTHING STORE!



ALL THAT HULLABALOO OVER THOSE MISSING PEOPLE AND NOW THEY'VE ALL COME BACK! EVERY DAY IT'S SOMETHING TO GET YOU EXCITED...
LIKE NEW!
SPECIAL!
BARGAIN
SALE
ANYTHING INTERESTING IN THE PAPER, HARRY?
NAW, SAME OLD STUFF! IT'S GETTING DARK... HELP ME CLOSE UP, SARAH!
DID YOU READ THIS ABOUT DR. KESTER'S THEORY? ABOUT PEOPLE FROM A SHADOW WORLD KIDNAPING PEOPLE FROM OUR WORLD...
A CRACKPOT... THAT'S ALL HE IS! COMPLETELY FANTASTIC!
I WONDER? I WONDER IF IT COULD BE THAT MAYBE HE'S RIGHT!
SARAH, ACT YOUR AGE! HOW COULD PEOPLE BE MADE TO DISAPPEAR INTO ANOTHER WORLD? HOW COULD THEY KIDNAP HUMANS LIKE THAT? A PARALLEL WORLD... BAH!
BUT THIS SCIENTIST KESTER IS MISSING NOW TOO! MAYBE HE WAS RIGHT AND THEY KIDNAPED HIM TO KEEP HIM FROM TALKING ANY MORE!
MORE PROBABLY HE RAN AWAY BECAUSE THEY LAUGHED AT HIM! LISTEN, THIS IS 1972! PEOPLE DON'T BELIEVE IN MAGIC CARPETS AND SUCH FANTASIES ANY MORE!
I'LL LOCK THE DOOR! WHAT'S FOR SUPPER, SARAH?
HARRY... THERE'S SOMEONE AT THE DOOR...
I WANT TO SEE YOU ON BUSINESS!
SORRY, MISTER, I'M CLOSING UP!

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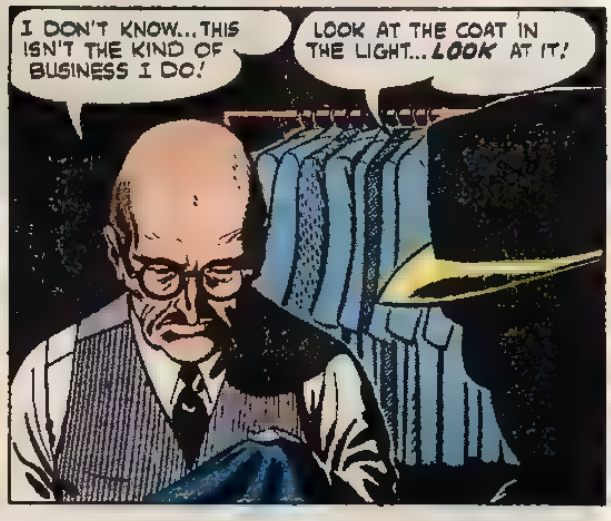
NOW, LOOK HERE, MISTER, I *SAID* WAS CLOSING!
THIS WILL BE PROFITABLE FOR YOU! I WANT TO PAWN MY COAT FOR A SHORT WHILE! I NEED SOME CASH IMMEDIATELY! I WILL RETURN LATER FOR IT AND PAY YOU GOOD INTEREST!

THERE'S A PAWN SHOP AROUND THE BLOCK, HARRY! SEND HIM THERE AND LOCK THE DOOR!
SHH, SARAH! HMM, THIS IS FINE QUALITY... GOOD WORKMANSHIP! HOW MUCH DO YOU..?
TWENTY DOLLARS IS ALL I NEED! I WILL RETURN IN A FEW HOURS AND PAY YOU $10.00 INTEREST!

A STRANGE FEELING CAME TO HARRY THEN... SOMETHING DEEP INSIDE HIM TOLLED A WARNING BELL, URGING HIM TO FORGET THIS TRANSACTION... TO SEND THIS SHADOWY FIGURE ON HIS WAY...



BUT HARRY WAS A GREEDY MAN, AND A PLAN WAS ALREADY HATCHING IN HIS SLY, LITTLE MIND... A PLAN THAT STILLED THE WARNING BELL...

NO, HARRY...
BE STILL, SARAH! HERE'S YOUR TWENTY, MISTER!
THANK YOU! REMEMBER, I AM ONLY *PAWNING* IT WITH YOU FOR A LITTLE WHILE! DON'T SELL IT... I WARN YOU! AND ABOVE ALL...

THE DARK FIGURE WAS GONE THEN... BUT HARRY DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE... HE WAS TOO BUSY EXAMINING THE COAT...
YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE LET HIM IN, HARRY! THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG ABOUT THIS... I FEEL IT!
BEAUTIFUL... NEVER SAW SUCH MATERIAL IN MY WHOLE LIFE!
AND THE WORKMANSHIP! CAN'T EVEN FIND A SEAM! LIGHT AS A FEATHER, YET THICK AND WARM... THE MATERIAL SO SOFT YOU CAN GATHER IT IN YOUR HAND... THEN WHEN YOU RELEASE IT, THERE'S NOT ONE WRINKLE! NEVER HAVE I SEEN A GARMENT LIKE THIS BEFORE IN MY WHOLE LIFE!
QUICK, SARAH, MAKE SURE THE SHADES ARE TIGHTLY DRAWN... I'LL LOCK THE DOOR!
YOU HAVE SOMETHING ON YOUR MIND, HARRY... SOME SCHEME!
THIS COAT IS WORTH A FORTUNE, SARAH! AND I ONLY GAVE HIM $20.00 FOR IT! WHEN HE COMES BACK, WE WON'T ANSWER... PRETEND WE'RE NOT IN! HE'LL LEAVE... I DON'T THINK HE'LL MAKE A FUSS! I'VE GOT A HUNCH HE'S A SHADY CHARACTER, PROBABLY WITH THE POLICE AFTER HIM!
THEN YOU'LL SELL THE COAT FOR A BIG PROFIT?
NOT EVEN THAT, SARAH! ALL MY LIFE I'VE BEEN IN THE CLOTHING BUSINESS, NEW AND USED, AND NEVER HAVE I SEEN A GARMENT LIKE THIS! THIS COAT I'M KEEPING FOR MYSELF! I COULDN'T BEAR TO THINK OF ANYONE ELSE WEARING IT!
NO, HARRY! DON'T PUT IT ON! REMEMBER WHAT HE SAID... HE SAID... HE WARNED YOU NOT TO LET ANYONE TRY IT ON!
HE JUST SAID THAT TO FRIGHTEN ME! HE KNOWS THE VALUE OF THIS COAT! HE HAS NOTHING TO PROVE I DIDN'T BUY IT FROM HIM INSTEAD OF LEND HIM MONEY ON IT! HE HAS NO WAY TO CLAIM IT! NOW, LET'S SEE HOW IT LOOKS!
FEELS GOOD... IT'S A PERFECT FIT... LIKE IT WAS MADE FOR ME!

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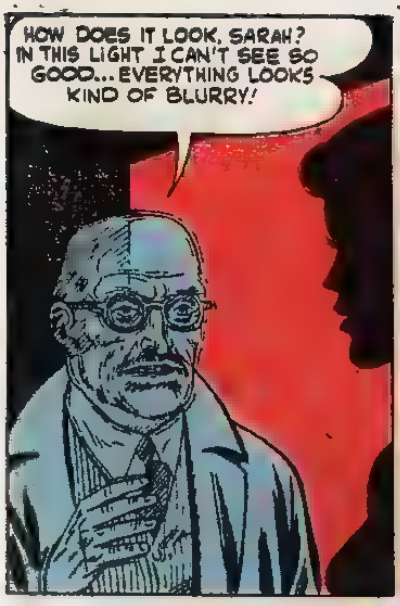
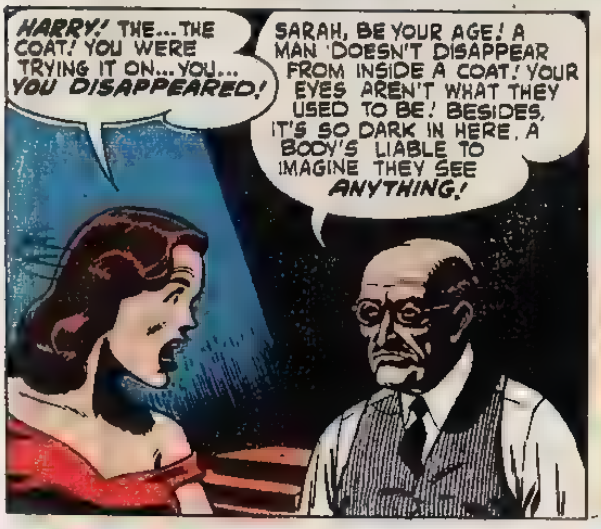
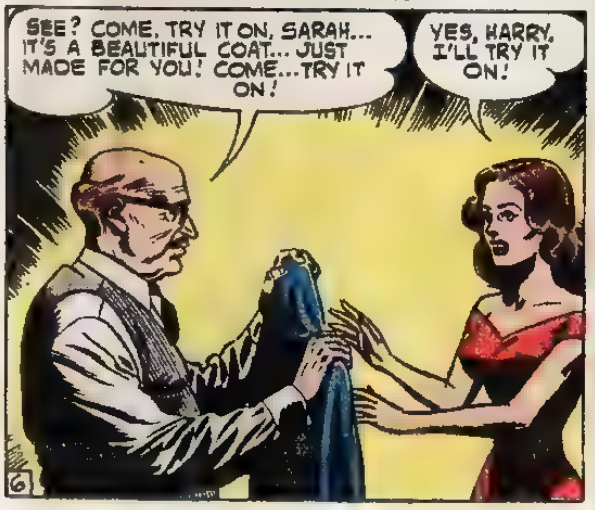


THE COAT FELL LIMPLY TO THE FLOOR... EMPTY, IN THE LIGHT FROM ABOVE! SARAH STOOD MUTE, LOOKING DUMBLY, WITHOUT COMPREHENSION AT THE EMPTY COAT!

A HAND TOUCHED HER ARM FROM BEHIND! SHE STARTED, TURNED, A SCREAM TREMBLING ON HER LIPS!


HARRY! THE... THE COAT! YOU WERE TRYING IT ON... YOU... YOU DISAPPEARED!
SARAH, BE YOUR AGE! A MAN DOESN'T DISAPPEAR FROM INSIDE A COAT! YOUR EYES AREN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE! BESIDES, IT'S SO DARK IN HERE, A BODY'S LIABLE TO IMAGINE THEY SEE ANYTHING!

HE STOOD IN THE LIGHT, HOLDING THE COAT UP... AND SARAH WALKED TOWARD IT, HER EYES UNSEEING, HER MOVEMENTS TRANCELIKE, AS HIS VOICE MURMURED MONOTONOUSLY...



AND IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, THE PAPER WAS FILLED WITH FAMILIAR HEADLINES AGAIN: PEOPLE WERE DISAPPEARING MYSTERIOUSLY AND LATER MAKING SUDDEN REAPPEARANCES! HARRY AND HIS WIFE, TOO, HAD LEFT "ON A VACATION"... THEN RETURNED! HARRY CAME TO THE DOOR, HIS WIFE BEHIND HIM, THE SAME AS USUAL... SO IT WAS EVERY NIGHT, NEVER CHANGING! YET, THE BOY WHO DELIVERED THE PAPER *THOUGHT* HE FELT A DIFFERENCE...

HAVE YOU EVER ATTENDED A SEANCE TO CONTACT SOMEONE IN THE WORLD BEYOND? WELL THESE CHARACTERS VISIT A MEDIUM QUITE RARE, WHO PROMISES TO ANSWER THEIR QUESTIONS THROUGH THE VOICE OF HER SPIRIT-GUIDE IN THE LAND OF THE DEAD, BUT HER ACT WAS TOO WELL DONE!

MEET THE DEAD

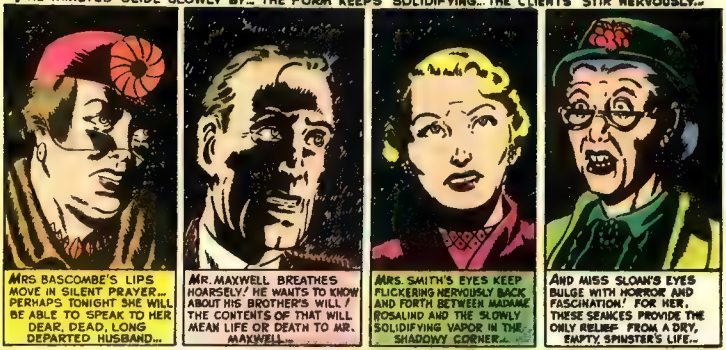
THIS IS MY FIRST SEANCE HERE... AND I'M SO THRILLED! I USED TO GO TO MADAME BERTHA OVER ON STATE STREET... BUT I UNDERSTAND THAT MADAME ROSALIND HAS EVER SO MUCH BETTER CONTACTS IN THE SPIRIT WORLD!
SHHH... HERE SHE COMES NOW!
DON PERLIN
C-886

MADAME ROSALIND NODS CURTLY AT HER FOUR CLIENTS... HASTILY THEY LINK HANDS AND WAIT FOR HER TO GO INTO HER TRANCE...

THE THICK BLACK SILENCE IS BROKEN ONLY BY MADAME ROSALIND'S EERIE GROANS AS SHE CALLS TO HER SPIRIT-GUIDE IN THE LAND OF THE DEAD...

AND THEN... SUDDENLY, A VAPOROUS FORM APPEARS IN THE DARKEST CORNER OF THE ROOM...

THE MINUTES SLIDE SLOWLY BY... THE FORM KEEPS SOLIDIFYING... THE CLIENTS STIR NERVOUSLY...


MRS BASCOMBE'S LIPS MOVE IN SILENT PRAYER... PERHAPS TONIGHT SHE WILL BE ABLE TO SPEAK TO HER DEAR, DEAD, LONG DEPARTED HUSBAND...
MR. MAXWELL BREATHES HOARSELY! HE WANTS TO KNOW ABOUT HIS BROTHER'S WILL! THE CONTENTS OF THAT WILL MEAN LIFE OR DEATH TO MR. MAXWELL...
MRS. SMITH'S EYES KEEP FLICKERING NERVOUSLY BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN MADAME ROSALIND AND THE SLOWLY SOLIDIFYING VAPOR IN THE SHADOWY CORNER...
AND MISS SLOAN'S EYES BULGE WITH HORROR AND FASCINATION! FOR HER, THESE SEANCES PROVIDE THE ONLY RELIEF FROM A DRY, EMPTY SPINSTER'S LIFE...

NO LONGER FORMLESS... BUT NOW A CLEARLY DISCERNIBLE MALE FIGURE, THE SPIRIT HOVERS OVER THE TABLE...

ONLY TO VANISH WHEN THE DOOR BURSTS SUDDENLY OPEN AND LIGHT SPILLS INTO THE ROOM FOLLOWED BY AN ANGRY MAN...

GEORGE, P-PLEASE... THIS IS THE FIRST TIME IN OVER A YEAR!
I WORK HARD FOR MY MONEY! I PUT IN OVERTIME AT THE OFFICE TO MAKE A LIVING... AND YOU THROW IT AWAY ON A FAKE MEDIUM!

BUT NOW MADAME ROSALIND HAS SNAPPED OUT OF HER TRANCE... AND SHE RISES WRATHFULLY...

JACQUES WAS HERE! EVERYONE SAW HIM MATERIALIZING BEFORE THEIR EYES!
THAT IS RIGHT! WE DID!
YOU'RE NOTHING BUT A MONEY-GRABBING FAKE! YOU CAN PULL THE WOOL OVER THE EYES OF IDIOTS LIKE MY WIFE AND THE OTHERS HERE... BUT YOU CAN'T FOOL ME!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

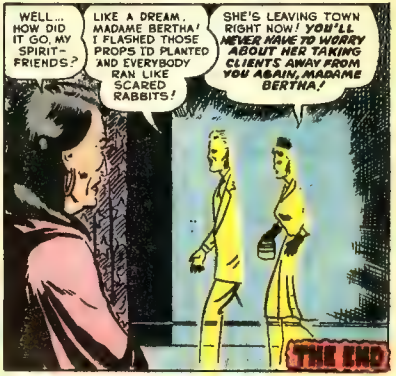
AND I'M GONNA PROVE IT RIGHT NOW!
LOOK! WIRES, GAUZE, A MASK! WHAT DO YOU CALL THESE?
I-I DON'T KNOW HOW THEY GOT HERE!
WELL... I DO! AND SO DOES EVERYBODY ELSE IN THIS ROOM NOW! WHAT COULD BE MORE DESPICABLE THAN TO PRETEND YOU'RE CALLING UP SPIRITS OF THE DEAD... JUST TO MAKE MONEY!
YOU MUST BELIEVE ME! JACQUES WAS HERE! I HAVE NEVER, NEVER RESORTED TO TRICKERY!
I WANTED TO BELIEVE YOU WHEN I CAME HERE! WE ALL WANTED TO BELIEVE YOU! BUT THAT WIRE, THE GAUZE, AND THE MASK... WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?
I... (SOB!)... DON'T... KNOW!
UGGGH-- SHE IS DESPICABLE! I'M GLAD YOU FOLLOWED ME HERE TONIGHT, GEORGE!
I... I THINK I'M GOING TO FAINT...
MY BROTHER'S WILL... I MUST FIND OUT ABOUT THE WILL! I'LL HAVE TO GO TO ANOTHER MEDIUM...
I WON'T GIVE UP! SOMEHOW... SOMEWHERE... I'LL CONTACT MY DEAD HUSBAND!
WHAT'RE YOU ALL STANDING AROUND FOR? CLEAR OUT BEFORE I TURN YOU OVER TO THE POLICE FOR HELPING TO PERPETRATE A FRAUD!
3

THERE THEY GO RUNNING LIKE SCARED RABBITS ...I'LL GIVE YOU 24 HOURS TO CLEAR OUT OF TOWN, MADAME ROSALIND!
WHERE CAN I GO?
THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM!

SOBBING BITTERLY, MADAME ROSALIND BEGINS PACKING HER BELONGINGS...

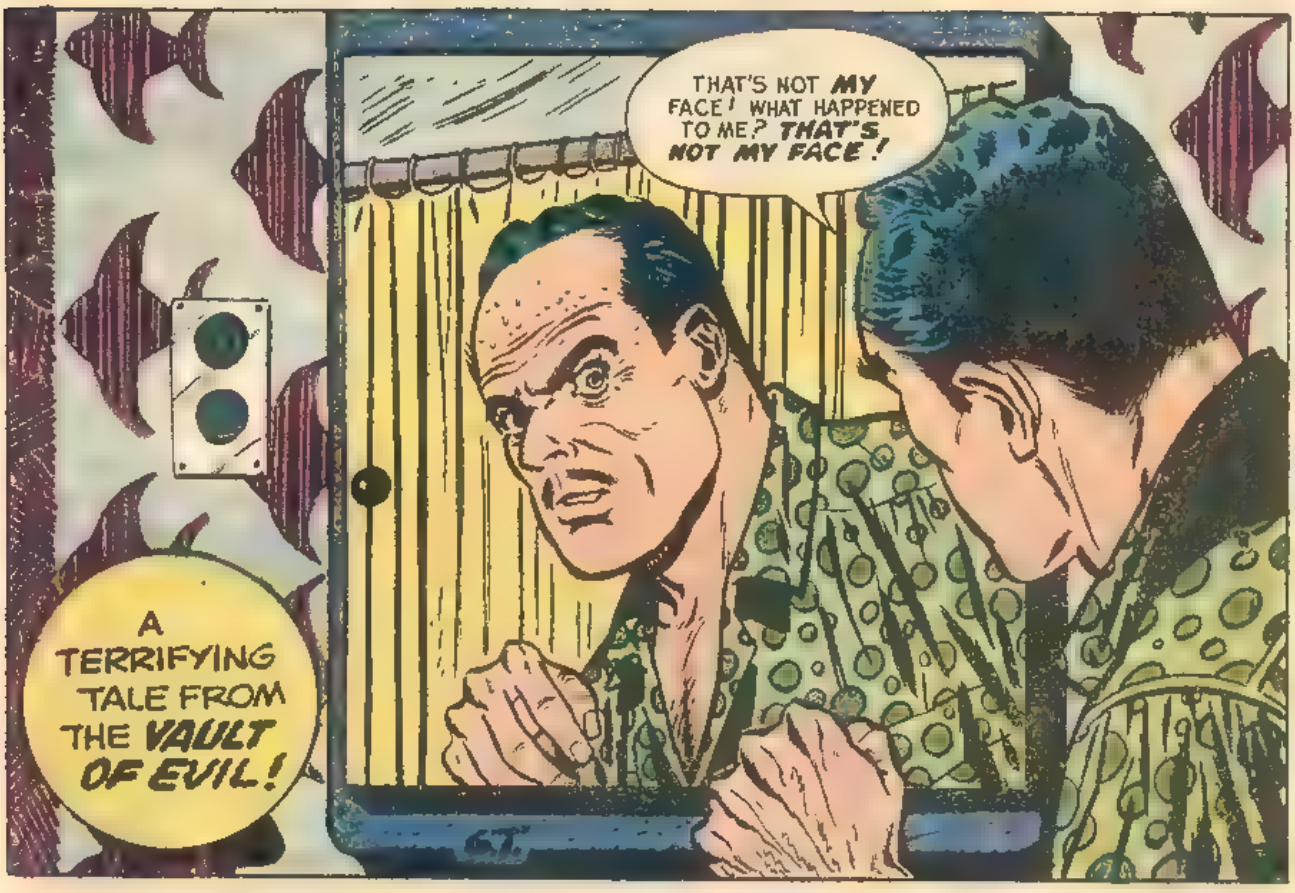
MEANWHILE, MR. AND MRS SMITH WALK SLOWLY THRU THE SHADOWY STREETS...

IT WAS THAT WIRE AND GAUZE AND THE MASK THAT DID THE TRICK!
YOU'RE RIGHT! NOTHING LIKE EXPOSING PROPS TO SHAKE PEOPLE'S BELIEF IN SPIRITS!


WELL... HOW DID IT GO, MY SPIRIT-FRIENDS?
LIKE A DREAM, MADAME BERTHA! I FLASHED THOSE PROPS ID PLANTED AND EVERYBODY RAN LIKE SCARED RABBITS!
SHE'S LEAVING TOWN RIGHT NOW! YOU'LL NEVER HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HER TAKING CLIENTS AWAY FROM YOU AGAIN, MADAME BERTHA!
THE END

HERE'S ANOTHER SPINE-CHILLING OFFERING... JASON FINDS OUT HE'S BEING TWO-TIMED.... AND, BEING A MAN OF ACTION, HE KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT TO DO! THE FUNNY THING ABOUT IT, THO, IS THAT THE TWO VICTIMS OF HIS VICIOUS PLAN ARE GOING TO GET A **BANG** OUT OF IT TOO!

THE OTHER FACE



IT HAPPENED TO ME... THE GHASTLIEST, MOST UNBELIEVABLE THING THAT COULD HAPPEN TO ANYBODY! BUT I'M THE KIND OF A GUY LOTS OF THINGS HAPPEN TO! FOR INSTANCE, FINDING OUT THAT MY WIFE WAS IN LOVE WITH MY BEST FRIEND!
I CAN'T STAND IT ANY MORE, ANDREW! I HATE JASON! WE'VE GOT TO GET RID OF HIM!
BE PATIENT, DARLING! I'LL FIND A WAY!

NOT THAT I CARED FOR HER ANY MORE! I JUST DIDN'T WANT HIM TO HAVE HER! I KNEW HER FOR THE VICIOUS, MEAN TIGER SHE COULD BE.. WHILE HE, DR. ANDREW ARNOLD, WAS CALM.. METHODICAL..
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY... WE'VE GOT TO KILL HIM!
THAT'S FOOLISH, RUTH! NOT TO MENTION DANGEROUS! LEAVE IT TO ME! I HAVE A PLAN THAT'S FOOLPROOF AND SAFE! WE'LL BE TOGETHER AND JASON WILL BE OUT OF THE PICTURE!

DON'T DARE MISS THE THRILLS IN AVENGERS #175!

CONTINUED AFTER NEXT PAGE

WELL, WHAT WOULD YOU DO? THERE THEY WERE... BOTH PLANNING TO GET ME OUT OF THE WAY... **MURDER ME** IF NECESSARY! NICE FIX TO BE IN, EH? AND I WAS IN IT UP TO MY NECK! I LISTENED SOME MORE TO WHAT THEY WERE FIGURING TO DO WITH ME...

WELL, WHATEVER YOU'RE GOING TO DO, IT BETTER BE GOOD AND **FAST!** I CAN'T STAND HIM ANY LONGER!

DON'T WORRY, DARLING, I'LL HANDLE EVERYTHING **MY** WAY!

I COULDN'T GO TO THE COPS... HOW COULD I PROVE ANYTHING? IT WASN'T ANDY WHO SCARED ME... IT WAS RUTH... COLD, VICIOUS RUTH! OF THE TWO, I HATED HER THE WORST! TO DO A THING LIKE THIS TO ME...

THIS ALL TOOK PLACE OUT IN MY GARDEN! I STOLE BACK INTO MY HOUSE AND GOT A GUN! I WASN'T SURE WHAT I WAS GOING TO DO, BUT I WANTED TO BE PROTECTED!

GOT TO WATCH 'EM EVERY MINUTE! GOT TO BE ON MY GUARD! RUTH WOULD KILL ME... ANDY'S GOT ANOTHER WAY... WONDER WHAT?

I GOT THIS GUN IN MY POCKET JUST IN TIME! THEY CAME IN SMILING... ALL SWEET AND CHARMING...

I'VE JUST BEEN SHOWING ANDY THE DAHLIAS IN THE GARDEN, JASON! HE THINKS WE OUGHT TO TRIM THEM... DON'T YOU, ANDY?

IT'S GOT TO BE DONE, YOU KNOW! YOU'VE GOT TO KILL **SOME** PARTS TO MAKE **OTHER** PARTS GROW!

DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE A HORTICULTURIST, ANDY! GIVE UP PLASTIC SURGERY?

NOT AT ALL, OLD MAN! AT LEAST NOT WHILE I STILL HAVE THE TOUCH!

YOU **DO** HAVE **THAT**, DON'T YOU? ALL THOSE MIDDLE-AGED WOMEN FLOCKING TO YOU TO HAVE THEIR FEATURES REMODELED!

THEY ACTED SO NATURALLY THAT IT WAS HARD TO BELIEVE WHAT I HAD SEEN AND HEARD! MAYBE IT WAS A **DREAM** ...MAYBE I HAD ONLY IMAGINED IT...

HERE YOU ARE, DARLING... YOUR FAVORITE COCKTAIL, EXACTLY THE WAY YOU LIKE IT!

THANKS, RUTH!

BUT IT WASN'T A DREAM, AND I HADN'T IMAGINED IT! IT WAS A HORRIBLE GHASTLY REALITY!

AAAGH!

DRACULA LIVES—IN THREE TERROR-FRAUGHT TALES, NO LESS!

I BLACKED OUT, BUT I WAS STILL ALIVE! THEN, I HAD VISIONS...
STRANGE, TERRIFYING VISIONS...
THEN, THE FACES, HEAVILY BANDAGED, BLENDED INTO ONE... LOOKING DOWN AT ME... CALLING TO ME...
WAKE UP! IT'S ALL OVER! WAKE UP!
WAKE UP? IT WAS MORE LIKE FIGHTING MY WAY THROUGH A MASS OF FOG THAT SEEMED TO SUFFOCATE ME, BUT I MADE IT! I WAS SITTING UP AND I WAS IN BED! WHEN I SPOKE, MY VOICE WAS MUFFLED...
WHERE... WHERE AM I? WHAT HAPPENED?
GET UP! GET UP AND GO TO THE MIRROR!
I WAS STILL PRETTY WEAK, BUT I MADE IT! SOMEONE WAS GIVING ME ORDERS, SOMEONE I COULDN'T SEE YET! I LOOKED INTO THE MIRROR...
MY FACE! IT'S ALL BANDAGED! WHY?
YOU'LL SEE! TAKE OFF THE BANDAGES! DON'T BE AFRAID... THERE'S NOTHING TO FEAR ANY MORE!
HAVE I BEEN IN AN ACCIDENT? I WAS HIT ON THE HEAD... I REMEMBER THAT!
YOU'LL FIND OUT QUICKLY! NOW LOOK!
THAT FACE! IT'S NOT MINE! IT'S ...IT'S ANDY'S!
THAT'S RIGHT! NOW TURN AROUND!
GOOD HEAVENS! WHAT HAPPENED?
CAN'T YOU GUESS?

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WHO-WHO AM I ? WHO ARE YOU?
WHY, YOU'RE ANDY ARNOLD, REMEMBER! I'M JASON LUCAS! IT'S VERY SIMPLE!
NO! THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!
IS IT ? THE MIRROR DOESN'T LIE, DR. ARNOLD!
YOU DID THIS TO ME! YOU'RE A PLASTIC SURGEON! YOU MADE MY FACE TO LOOK LIKE YOURS, AND YOUR FACE TO LOOK LIKE MINE!
YOU'RE CRAZY, ANDY! WHY SHOULD I DO A THING LIKE THAT ?
I CAN'T BE GOING CRAZY! I KNOW WHO I AM NO MATTER WHAT FACE I HAVE! YOU DID THIS TO GET ME OUT OF THE WAY SO YOU COULD HAVE RUTH! SO THIS WAS YOUR SAFE, SURE, FOOLPROOF WAY!
SO YOU KNOW, EH ? ALL RIGHT, BUT WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT IT?
RUTH IS BEAUTIFUL, BUT CRUDE! SHE WANTED TO MURDER YOU, BUT MY WAY WAS SMARTER! WHATEVER YOU CLAIM, PEOPLE WILL TAKE IT AS THE RAVINGS OF A MIND UNBALANCED BY OVERWORK, AND THEY'LL PUT POOR DR. ANDREW ARNOLD AWAY! THEY'LL PUT YOU AWAY, JASON, NOT ME! I'LL BE PLAIN MR. JASON LUCAS!
YOU CAN'T! YOU CAN'T!
BUT I CAN! HOWEVER, I HAVEN'T TOLD RUTH YET OF WHAT I INTENDED TO DO! YOU'VE BEEN HERE A MONTH... UNDER SEDATIVES THAT RESTED YOU WHILE THE SCARS HEALED! I OPERATED ON MYSELF, AND NOW WE'RE BOTH READY TO FACE WHATEVER THE FUTURE BRINGS! I CALLED RUTH TO COME OVER!
SHE-SHE DOESN'T KNOW YET WHAT YOU'VE DONE?
NO! BUT SHE WILL KNOW NOW! HERE SHE IS!
RRRRING
4

DON'T MISS THE DUEL OF THE UNDEAD—IN DRACULA LIVES #3!

SHE CAME, IN, HER FACE MORE ANGRY AND BEAUTIFUL THAN I HAD EVER SEEN IT! THERE WAS EVERYTHING HATEFUL IN HER FACE! THERE WAS CRUELTY, VICIOUSNESS AND MURDER...

SO!

AND WHAT WAS GOING THROUGH *MY* MIND? I WAS THINKING THAT I WAS TRAPPED...THAT THERE WAS NO WAY OUT FOR ME... THAT THEY HAD CHANGED ME SO MUCH, I WAS NOW PLAYING THE FOOL TO MY WIFE AND TO MY BEST FRIEND!

NO WAY OUT? THERE WAS *ONE DESPERATE* CHANCE, AND I HAD TO TAKE IT!

DARLING, HE KNOWS EVERYTHING! MAYBE *YOUR* WAY IS THE BEST AFTER ALL!

WHAT? AFTER ALL THIS WAITING? YOU KEPT ME AWAY FROM HERE FOR ALMOST A MONTH, AND NOW YOU TELL ME *MY* WAY IS THE BEST? WHY DIDN'T YOU GO THROUGH WITH WHATEVER IT WAS YOU WERE GOING TO DO?

WAIT A MINUTE!

I-I COULDN'T DO IT...

THEN I WILL! MY WAY IS STILL THE FASTEST AND THE BEST!

WAIT! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND, RUTH DARLING!

HE SCREAMED, BUT HER BULLETS CUT OFF THE SCREAMS QUICKLY ENOUGH, AND AS SHE FIRED, I BURST INTO HYSTERICAL LAUGHTER!

THERE! THERE! MY WAY IS THE BEST!

ARRGHH!

HA! HA HAHAHA

BANG! BANG! BANG!

HOW I LAUGHED WHEN SHE HANDED THE GUN OVER TO ME!

HERE, ANDY! GET RID OF THIS, AND WE'LL DISPOSE OF THE BODY...

HA! HA! HA! HA!

I WAS STILL LAUGHING AS I EMPTIED THE GUN INTO HER! SHE NEVER KNEW WHY...

HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA! HA!

AIIIEE!

BANG BANG

THE END

WHO IS MEMORAX? LEARN HIS STARTLING SECRET — IN **WARLOCK** #8!